

20th April 2026

STATEMENT of HERITAGE IMPACT UPDATED for Section 4.55(1A) Modification

The Homestead, Georges Hall
In support of Application for Development
42a Beale Street,
Georges Hall, NSW, 2198
For HopePoint Christian School.

Introduction

This statement of Heritage Impact Statement is in support of an integrated Development Application involving referral to Heritage NSW under s58 of the Heritage Act 1977. Due to the State heritage Listing of the property, approval is required under the Heritage Act for the following reasons:

- 1) Development is being carried out in relation to the land on which the building is situated and the land that comprises the place.
- 2) Trees are intended to be removed from the place.

As the proposed building is located within the historical curtilage of The Homestead, impacts on views and setting have been carefully considered.

Site Information

The subject site is located at 42a Beale Street, Georges Hall, NSW, 2198 and has an alternate address of 1a Lionel Street, Georges Hall NSW 2198. It is described as part Lot 101 DP8275302. It is within the City of Canterbury Bankstown Local Government Area and is currently owned by HopePoint Church Property Overseer Pty Ltd.



Figure 1: Location plan (Sixmaps 2023)

Statement of Heritage Significance

The following statement of heritage significance is taken from the Conservation Management Plan 2024.

The Homestead at Georges Hall is important in the cultural history of NSW as being part of the lands once owned by Colonel George Johnston. It has a strong association with the Johnston Family of Annandale and is a substantially intact, well-proportioned and finely detailed colonial Georgian building which retains characteristics typical of its period and style. It was the second Johnston house built in this area with the first house being affected by flooding. The location of "The Homestead" on the rise above the river and floodplain, demonstrates the settlers' adaptation to their environment. The Homestead is evidence of the earliest permanent settlement in the area and is the oldest remaining house in the Bankstown district. It is one of only a few houses of this type remaining in NSW. The property is also associated with the HopePoint church and school community.

Listings

The Homestead has several Statutory and Non-Statutory listings.

State Heritage Register (SHR)

The Homestead was given a Permanent Conservation Order No. 448 by the Heritage Council of NSW and the order was published in the Government Gazette on 4th August, 1989.

The Homestead is listed on the New South Wales State Heritage Register.

Canterbury - Bankstown Local Environment Plan (LEP) 2023

The Homestead is listed on the Heritage Schedule of Canterbury-Bankstown LEP as item number 1143.

National Trust of Australia (NSW)

The Homestead is listed on the Register of the National Trust of Australia (New South Wales). This is a non-statutory register compiled by the National Trust and listing places and items the Trust considers being of cultural and natural heritage; it performs an advisory and educational role.

Register of the National Estate

The Register of the National Estate was originally established under the Australian Heritage Commission Act 1975. The Register of the National Estate was closed in 2007 and is no longer a statutory list. The register is now an archive for information only. The homestead was listed on the Register of the National Estate.

<i>Heritage Listing</i>	<i>Listing Title</i>	<i>Listing Number</i>
Heritage Act - Permanent Conservation Order - former		00448
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		00448
National Trust of Australia register		
Register of the National Estate		

Description of Site

The site of The Homestead is largely surrounded by suburban housing with heavy street planting along Henry Lawson Drive to the North. The site includes the historic Homestead building, two small outbuildings associated with the homestead, a previous hostel building from 1959, now used for education activities, and more recent structures associated with the church and school including portable classrooms, a two-storey church building and a sports hall.

The Homestead sits at the centre of the site with the other buildings located to the east and west. There is a car park to the south and open space to the north which contains elements of

the old carriage drive. There are several trees on the site, including large Eucalypts and Pepper trees.

There is horse trough to the north of the Homestead building which has been moved to the site from elsewhere and is a locally listed heritage item.

The site is within the Local Aboriginal Land Council area of Gandangara.

The Homestead building is largely intact original fabric dating from 1836-1837. There are two extant outbuildings associated with The Homestead building being a privy with a more recently attached storeroom and a separate two room building with a fireplace possibly a worker's cottage from the late nineteenth century.



Figure 2: Aerial View. Subject site edged in red. Heritage curtilage shaded yellow and areas recently added shaded blue. (Sixmaps 2024 with edits by JPA&D)

The Sites History

The site was subdivided by Maria Ann Rossi-Johnston in 1912 and she retained The Homestead and about 100 acres of land. In 1917 the 100 acres was sold by Ralph Johnston to Henry Crossing, a grazier from Pilliga and in 1920 it was again sold to James William Ashcroft and his wife Amelia Ashcroft. In 1922 the 100 acres was subdivided into "Deepwater Estate" and sold to a land agent Robert Harvey Layton. The Homestead remained on 6 acres, 133 perches and in 1923 was sold to Mrs Mable Rule Bean. In 1941 the Beale Street alignment was straightened and Lionel Street was closed and sold to Montague Bean. In 1948 the site was sold to After Care Association of NSW being part of portion 26 granted to George Johnston, 12 August 1804. Lot 6 in DP 30414 Vol 9201 Fol 215.

In the late 1950s it was decided to build a men's hostel, later named Ebsworth House, adjacent to The Homestead. To finance the construction, the land around the homestead was further subdivided. 14 lots were sold by Auction in 1960. (DP 30414)

In 1989 the site was bought by the Church of the Four Square Gospel "Calvary Chapel" (DP 306393) and in 1990 Calvary Chapel (later HopePoint Church) moved their school from

Greenacre to the site's eastern side renovating rooms in Ebsworth House to accommodate the school.

In 1992 The Homestead was restored and a new church designed by architects Meldrum Burrows was constructed and opened in October 1992. Between 1992 and 1995 Portable classrooms were added in front and behind Ebsworth house to the east of The Homestead to accommodate the growing school population. A new pre-school building, designed by View Architects was constructed in 1995 to the south west of The Homestead. As part of the Development Application for the preschool the site was amalgamated into one lot, being Lot 101 DP827530. This included additional property acquired since the Permanent Conservation Order gazetted in 1989. In 2010 a Gymnasium was built to the northwest of The Homestead under the Government Building Education Revolution (BER) program.

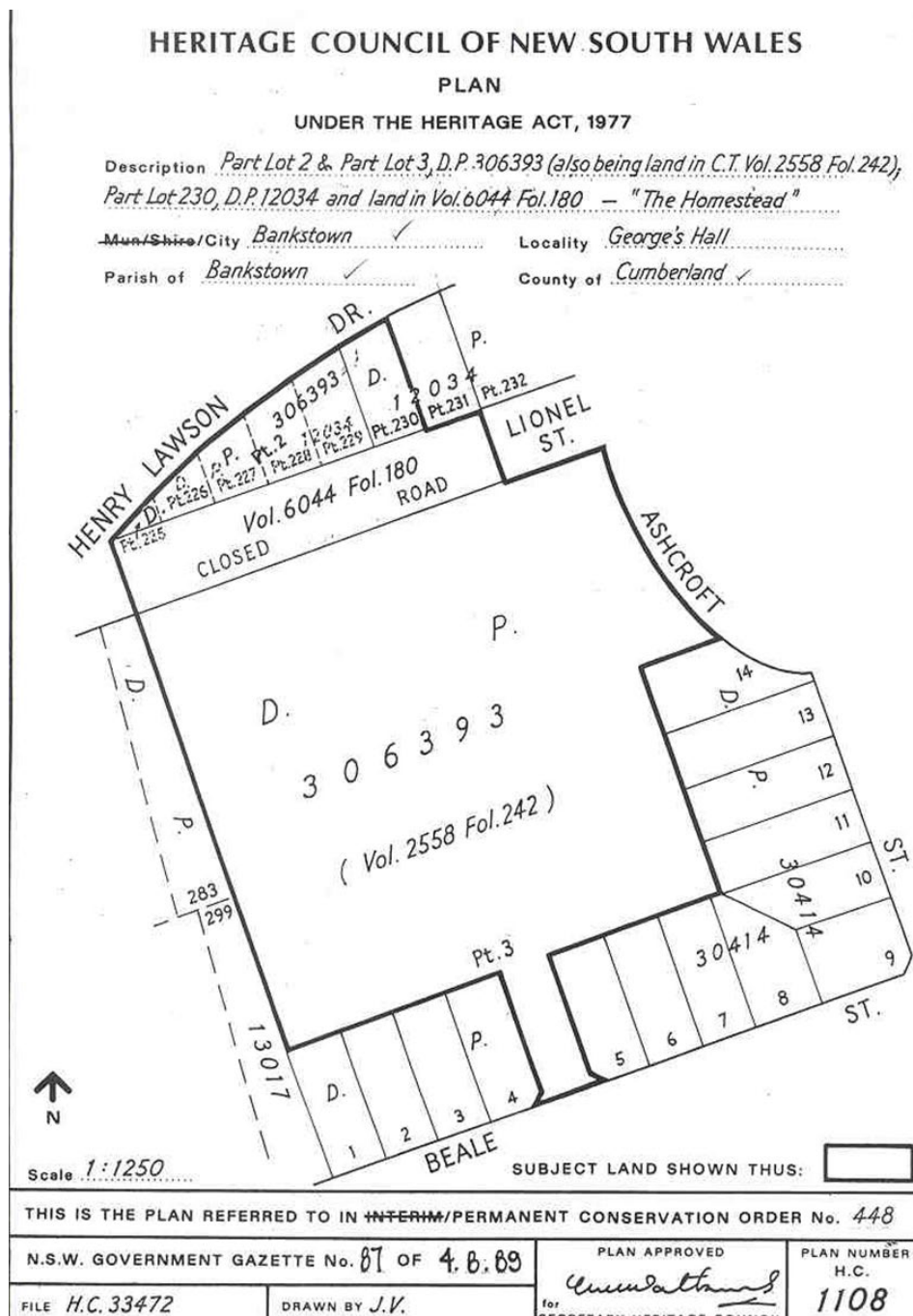


Figure 3: The curtilage as defined by Permanent Conservation Order No 448

Description of Proposal

It is proposed to demolish the existing single storey, four demountable classroom block which is not heritage significant fabric and replace it with a new two-storey masonry building to accommodate ten classrooms and student amenities.

Enabling works

To achieve this some enabling works will be necessary and 3 single storey demountable classrooms will be located to the south east of the site in an area currently allocated for car parking. This temporary structure will be over three metres from the nearest heritage outbuilding and being of a single storey will not have a negligible impact on The Homestead, The two historic outbuildings or the horse trough.

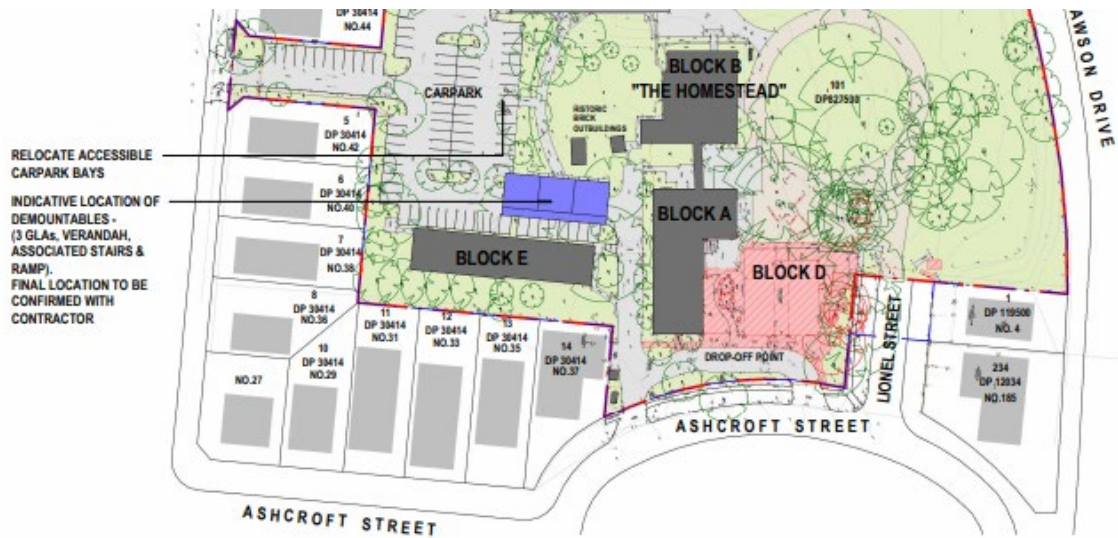


Figure 4: Temporary demountable classrooms (shown in blue) located in current car parking spaces.

Proposed Permanent Works

The proposed permanent structure does not physically connect with The Homestead, its two associated outbuildings or the horse trough. It is located to the northwest of The Homestead approximately 25m east of the building's verandah at the closest point.

The proposed building has a height of approximately 8.5m to the ridge line which is approximately 100mm below the ridge line of the Homestead and approximately 1.64m below the ridge height of the church building. The proposed building has been set back 5m from Lionel street and 25.25m from the Homestead at the closest point.

The visual language is appropriate to a school building designed in 2024 and it does not attempt to imitate The Homestead building. This enables the heritage structures to be clearly read as such without the confusion of imitations.

There is no change to The Homestead, its two associated outbuildings or the horse trough under this proposal.

The demolition required to accommodate the new building will include the removal of nine trees. None of these trees are of heritage significance.

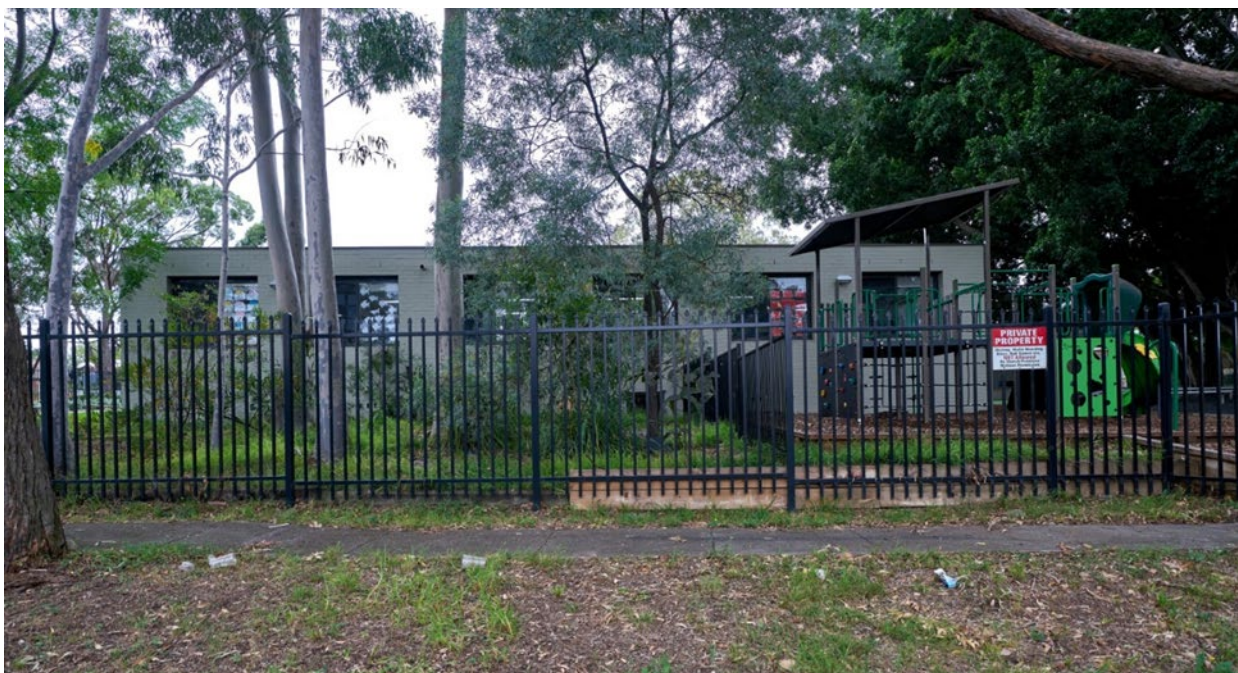


Figure 5: The existing classroom building to be demolished. (Ross Thornton, 2024)



Figure 6: The existing building to be demolished (left of the image) and The Homestead (Right of image). (Ross Thornton 2023)

Section 4.55 Modification Works

The additional items that form the Section 4.55 Modification Works are the excavation for and installation of a water tank and two diesel pumps, creation of steps to the lower level and the fencing of the area. The tank is required due to a reduced flow and pressure in the street main serving the Fire Hydrant. This requires the provision of 4 hours storage under AS2419.2021, to make up the required flow. This necessitates required storage of 180,000 litres. The tank needs two diesel pumps to provide the required pressure for the NSWFB to start fighting a fire on site until a second appliance can start boosting the system from the booster valve located at the side of Block C,

The location of the tank and pumps was largely influenced by the existing location of the current Fire Hydrant system booster valve which is at the site boundary in Lionel Street at the side of

Block C. It is necessary to interconnect the piping system from the tank and booster pumps with the existing system. Minimising inground piping runs was considered important in order to minimise the impact to tree root systems and any potential archaeology.



Figure 7: The proposed hydraulic works are located to the north of block c.

Several other locations were investigated by the hydraulic engineer and client however the size of the tank, the need to connect back into the existing piping system at the booster valve, minimisation of in ground disturbance and preservation of views to and from The Homestead determined the proposed location.

The visual impact of the tank and pumps will be further ameliorated by cutting into the slope at the end of Block C and locating them below the general ground line. This area will be fenced in a similar style to the boundary fence of the school.



Figure 8: A partial cross site section shows the relationship between the proposed hydraulic works building and The Homestead.

Assessment of Heritage Impact

The proposal respects the heritage significance of The Homestead. There are no changes planned to The Homestead building itself, the two associated outbuildings or the locally heritage

listed horse trough. The existing demountable building that is to be demolished has little heritage significance. The new building has been set back 5m from Lionel street and 25.25m from the Homestead at the closest point. These setbacks minimise the impact on the limited glimpses of The Homestead that can be seen from the end of Lionel Street.

The ridge of the proposed building is slightly lower than the ridge of the The Homestead, and noticeably lower than the tops of the Homestead chimneys. The distance between the two buildings and the intermediate tree cover minimises the impact of the new structure on The Homestead. The proposed design poses no detriment to The Homestead, associated outbuildings or the horse trough.

The development is necessary to provide the accommodation required for the educational needs of the student body beyond 2024 and to provide for the forecast student numbers. Enrolment has increased by 40% over the last two years, and there is currently a waiting list for places at the school. The school needs to remain financially viable in order to care for The Homestead building and other historic elements on the site.

Potential negative impacts of the development have been mitigated by siting the new building so as to maintain the very limited views of the building from the public domain.

The tank and pump works have been located as far from the view of The Homestead as possible and have been further minimised by locating them on an excavated level below the general ground level of the site. The fencing that will surround this compound will be the same as the general boundary school fencing and will further obscure views of the equipment from The Homestead verandah.

A Conservation Management Plan was prepared by JPA&D Australia Pty Ltd for The Homestead at Georges Hall in early 2024. This proposal addresses the relevant policies of the CMP as set out below.

Policy No.	Policy wording	How the proposal complies
Policy 25	The construction of new buildings on the site should be kept to the minimum necessary to support the continuation of the current uses with the preference being the adaptive re-use of the existing Homestead where practical. If new buildings are required, they should be sited and designed so as not to visually impact on the built elements that are of exceptional, high or moderate heritage significance.	The proposed building replaces an existing 4 classroom demountable building on the site that is of little heritage significance. The new building is sited and designed so as to minimise the visual impact on The Homestead.
Policy 26	Before any excavation is undertaken anywhere on the site an archaeological assessment must be undertaken and if this concludes that there is evidence of potential archaeological sites then an Archaeological Survey should be undertaken to determine whether an archaeological excavation is recommended.	An archaeological assessment has been undertaken for this project.
Policy 28	There are very limited views to the Homestead from the end of Lionel Street. As these are the only views of the homestead from the public domain these views should be maintained where practical	The proposed building has been designed so as to maintain views of The Homestead from the end of Lionel Street.
Policy 79	The classrooms, preschool, church and school hall dating from 1980 or later are of little heritage significance and can be demolished or	Under this proposal an existing 4 classroom demountable building which is not heritage

	adapted as desired although a standard exemption to the Heritage Act or a Section 60 heritage approval may be required.	significant fabric will be demolished.
Policy 82	Any new buildings on the site should be no more than two storeys high and not located either north or south of the homestead building in order to avoid encroaching on The Homestead and the remaining views to it from outside and within the site.	The proposed building is two storeys high and is located some 25.25m to the east of The Homestead.
Policy 83	Any new buildings on the site should be set back at least 10m from the homestead on the east and west.	The proposed building is set back approximately 25.25m to the east of The Homestead.
Policy 84	The design of new buildings on the site should not try and reproduce a Georgian era building but should be of their own time.	The new building is of a current design and does not try and reproduce a Georgian era building.
Policy 79	The classrooms, preschool, church and school hall dating from 1980 or later are of little heritage significance and can be demolished or adapted as desired although a standard exemption to the Heritage Act or a Section 60 heritage approval may be required.	The proposed building replaces an existing demountable building on the site that is of little heritage significance.
Policy 88	The existing views of the Homestead building from within the site should be maintained.	The design of the proposed building maintains the existing views of the Homestead from within the site.
Policy 89	No structures should be built to the north or south of the Homestead or within 10m of the east and west facades so as to preserve the views of the homestead within the site.	The proposed building is located 25.25m to the east of The Homestead
Policy 90	Views from the public domain should be enhanced where possible.	It has not been possible to enhance the views of The Homestead under this project however efforts have been made to minimise the impact on the existing limited views from the public domain at the end of Lionel Street.
Policy 91	Efforts should be made to increase views of The Homestead from the public domain where safe and practical to do so.	It has not been possible to enhance the views of The Homestead under this project however efforts have been made to minimise the impact on the existing limited views from the public domain at the end of Lionel Street.

Assessment of Visual Impact

There are very limited views of The Homestead building from the public domain. The views from the North are blocked by street tree planting along Henry Lawson Drive, the views to the south are limited by carparking and landscaping elements and afford only a distant view of the roofscape of The Homestead from the rear. The views from the east and west and west are largely blocked by suburban residential development with only an opportunity of limited glimpses of The Homestead from the end of Lionel Street. Although these views are interrupted by trees,

fencing and playground equipment they are the only opportunity for views of the front of The Homestead from the public domain.



Figure 9: View into the site and towards the Homestead from Beale Street. (Ross Thornton 2024)



Figure 10: View through the fence at the end of Lionel Street towards The Homestead (Ross Thornton 2024)



Figure 11: Views over the fence from the end of Lionel Street towards the Homestead (Google Streetview)

The views out from The Homestead verandah of the tank and pumps will be largely concealed from view due to their positioning at the end of block C and largely in an excavation below general ground level. The surrounding fence will match the existing school perimeter fence.



Figure 12: View from the verandah of The Homestead looking towards the location of the proposed tank, pumps and fence. (Image Ross Thronton 2024)

Alternatives

Do Nothing

The school has already begun to double-stream its kindergarten classes. As the School moves to double stream its other years, this will result in a significant growth in the student numbers. If nothing is done, the school will run out of classrooms at the end of 2025. The continued generation of income is necessary to care for The Homestead and other historic elements on the site.

Other design options

Several design options have been explored for the school building with earlier concept designs having a greater height and a greater impact on the view of The Homestead from Lionel Street. In the proposed design the ridge height has been lowered and the distance between the proposed building and the Homestead has been increased by approximately 2m in order to limit its impact on the Homestead.

A number of locations were considered for the tank and pumps including an on-grade option. The proposed location, excavated below general ground level, was selected as having the least heritage impact whilst meeting the necessary statutory requirements.

Conclusion

The proposal is fully compliant with NSW Heritage and Council's planning instruments in terms of the heritage elements of the site. It is largely compliant with the Conservation Management Plan with impacts on views from the public domain being mitigated as outlined above. The proposal is suitable for the site and should be looked on favourably by the consent authority.

Attachments

Appendix A) State Heritage Inventory Item Listing

References

Australia ICOMOS Inc, The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1999, Burwood Victoria 2000.
Heritage Council of NSW, NSW Historical Themes, October 2001
Heritage NSW: <http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au>
Heritage Office, Department of Urban Affairs and Planning, Heritage Curtilages, 1996
JPA&D Australia Pty Ltd. The Homestead, Georges Hall, Conservation Management Plan, 2024.

APPENDIX A: State Heritage Inventory Item Listing

Item Details

Name
Homestead, The
SHR/LEP/S170
SHR #00448

Address
1a Lionel Street GEORGES HALL NSW 2198

Local Govt Area
Canterbury-Bankstown

Local Aboriginal Land Council
Gandangara

Item Type	Group/Collection	Category
Built	Residential buildings (private)	Homestead building

All Addresses

Addresses								
Records Retrieved: 2								
Street No	Street Name	Suburb/Town/Postcode	Local Govt. Area	LALC	Parish	County	Electorate	Address Type
	Henry Lawson Drive	GEORGES HALL/NSW/2198	Canterbury-Bankstown	Unknown	Bankstown	Cumberland	BANKSTOWN	Alternate Address
1a	Lionel Street	GEORGES HALL/NSW/2198	Canterbury-Bankstown	Gandangara	Bankstown	Cumberland	EAST HILLS	Primary Address

Significance

Statement Of Significance

It is a fine example of Australian Georgian architecture and retains many of its former qualities and characteristics typical of its period and style. It has important associations with the renowned Johnston family. It was the second Johnston house built on this land with the first house being affected by flooding. Its location on the rise above the river and floodplain, demonstrates the settlers' adaptation to their environment. The Homestead is the earliest remaining house in the Bankstown district. It is also evidence of the earliest permanent settlement in the area. (Lester Tropman and Associates 1987:2)

Criteria a)

Historical Significance

It has important associations with the reknown Johnston family. It was the second Johnston house built on this land with the first house being affected by flooding. Its location on the rise above the river and floodplain, demonstrates the settlers adaption to their environment. The homestead is the earliest remaining house in the Bankstown district. It is also evidence of the earliest permanent settlement in the area. (Lester Tropman & Assoc 1987:2)

Criteria b)

Historical Association Significance

It is associated with the man and family of officer of the Marines Lieutenant, later Major George Johnson, also of "Annandale", to whom the land was granted, his wife Esther Abrahams (Julian), sons George Johnson (jnr) (d.1823), David (who inherited the estate), his wife Selina Willey, their eight children (all had at George's Hall) including two sons who inherited the estate, George and Arthur, Arthur's wife Maria, Ralph Johnson.

It is also associated with the Military, being an unofficial army base in the district.

It is also associated with later owners, being Henry Crossing, James and Amelia Ashcroft, Robert Layton, the After Care Association who ran an elderly women's hostel on site, and now with the Calgary Church.

Criteria c)

Aesthetic/Technical Significance

It is a fine example of Australian Georgian architecture and retains many of its former qualities and characteristics typical of its period and style. (Lester Tropman & Assoc 1987:2)

Even in its reduced curtilage today, the house retains its traditional relationship to Prospect Creek, the site of the first Johnson land grant and the first homestead. A recreated carriage loop in front of the house, and enframing trees (plantings and natural) provide some sympathetic setting for the house. And some demonstration of common plants in 19th century gardens of this type. (Stuart Read, 2001)

Criteria f)

Rarity

It is the earliest remaining house in the Bankstown district. (Lester Tropman & Assoc 1987:2)

Criteria g)

Representative

The house and its curtilage, although reduced, are a good representative example of early gentry estates in South West Sydney, on early land grants to non-convicts. Many elements remain that are typical, including a circular carriage loop, the relationship of the homestead to the river/transport route, typical plantings of both exotic and remnant indigenous flora, and Georgian architecture and detailing. (Stuart Read, 2001)

Integrity/Intactness

Outbuildings, including a dairy, no longer survive. The coach house and stables were demolished in the 1920s.

The family held the estate until 1911 when it was subdivided as the Deepwater Estate. The family held remiaining land until 1917. From 1949 the house was used as a convalescent home, and there were further subdivisions during 1960-61.

The original Johnson property is now within Kentucky Reserve by Dhurawal Bay. Within that reserve, three large old English Oaks, (Quercus robur) remain which may date to the military use of the site or to the first homestead site. These are now fenced off within the reserve near Lake Mirrambeena.

The Homestead is now owned by the Calvary Chapel Church and they operate a pre-school and primary school in the grounds.

The estate is relatively intact in a much reduced form, in particular the immediate surrounds of the homestead, its relationship to the river, and some remnant landscape elements such as early plantings or their progeny, and a recreated carriage loop on the site of the old one. The rose garden and fence were reinstated in 1992/93. (Stuart Read, 2001).

Owners

Records Retrieved: 0		
Organisation	Stakeholder Category	Date Ownership Updated
No Results Found		

Description

Designer	Builder/Maker
Unknown	
Physical Description	Updated
Site and setting, Garden: Even in its reduced curtilage today, the house retains its traditional relationship to Prospect Creek (over Kentucky Reserve, Henry Lawson Drive & the Murrumbidgee Regional Park to Dhurawal Bay), and to the site of the earlier homestead (lost due to regular flooding). The original Johnson property is now within Kentucky Reserve by Dhurawal Bay. Within that reserve, three large old English (European) oak trees, (<i>Quercus robur</i>) remain which may date to the military use of the site or to the first homestead site. These are now fenced off within the reserve near Lake Mirrambeena. The estate (in much reduced form) is relatively intact, in particular the immediate surrounds of the homestead, its relationship to the river, and some remnant landscape elements such as early plantings or their progeny. A recreated carriage loop is on the site of the old one in front of the house. The rose garden and fence were reinstated in 1992/93. The carriage loop and enframing trees (plantings and natural) provide some sympathetic setting for the house. Species include spotted gum (<i>Corymbia maculata</i>), forest red gum (<i>Eucalyptus tereticornis</i>), Brazilian pepper tree (<i>Schinus molle</i>) (one tree to the rear of the house could be as old as the house), white cedar (<i>Melia azederach</i> var. <i>australasica</i>), camphor laurel (<i>Cinnomomum camphora</i>) and Hill's/weeping fig, (<i>Ficus microcarpa</i> var. <i>hillii</i>). A trumpet creeper (<i>Campsis grandiflora</i>) twines up the trunks of the pepper trees, again a common plant in 19th century gardens of this type. (Stuart Read, pers. comm., 10/2001 visit) Homestead: Stuccoed brick construction on sandstone foundations enclosing extensive cellars. Floor and roof are of pit sawn timbers fastened by hand forged nails. The original part of the house is of symmetrical design with wide verandas to three sides enclosing four large rooms, a hall and pantry. Two additional rooms added at south west corner. The attic has four large rooms lit by attractive dormers having arched transoms with curved glazing bars. This pattern is repeated in the fine fanlight over the south door (Sheedy, 1976). The interior joinery is cedar with extensive panelled window reveals, dados and built-in cupboards. Doors are all six panelled and windows either twelve pane sash type or French windows with transoms above. Windows are all shuttered, including the unusual front French door with narrow sidelights. Verandas are massively constructed of timber with an unusual tall skillion pitch over the cellar entrance. There are some fine marble chimney pieces and Edwardian timber ones in later additions. The roof is now covered with Marseilles pattern tiles and Edwardian brackets have been added to the veranda posts but the house is otherwise intact and in very good condition. The original kitchen wing has possibly been incorporated within later additions (Sheedy, 1976). Outbuildings: All other outbuildings have been demolished (Sheedy, 1976).	
Physical Condition	Updated 09/24/1997
Physical condition is good. Restoration and archaeological work undertaken in 1992/93. Pre-2006: interior front two rooms and entry lobby/hallway adaptively reused as Church meeting and relaxation rooms. Two fireplaces installed in spaces where original (removed) fireplaces had been. Chimneys have been blocked up to prevent water entry. 2006: Homestead's exterior recently repainted. Joinery balustrading to verandah all in good order.	
Modifications And Dates	

6/4/1798 170 acre grant to George Johnston at "Marquee Point", George's Hall (first house built?)
1804 futher 60 acres granted to GJ
by 1837: 100 acres were cleared, 30 acres cultivated, by the time the present homestead was built.
1837 - built (the third house on the estate)
1912 - two additional rooms added at the south west corner and other external alterations
1911 estate subdivided as the Deepwater Estate.
1917 last remaining family held land sold.
- 1949 various owners of house
(bet. 1949 and 1991: addition to south side of house removed).
1960-61 futher subdivisions
1990 photo of front shows 2 jacaranda trees (J.mimosaefolia), one centrally placed inside the carriage loop, one to the left (north) side of the homestead's front facade. Both are gone now (10/2006). ALso shown is a Lombardy poplar (Populus nigra 'Italica' tree behind (east of) the homestead - now gone. Also shown directly in front of the front steps/door, but on the lawn/carriage loop is a horse drinking trough. This has since been relocated to the NW of the circular drive, aligned with a side drive entrance off Ashcroft Street to the north. (Stuart Read, 13/10/06).
1991+ CalvaryGospel Church moves school function onto the site's northern side.
1992-3 Causeway Church (owners, formerly Calvary Gospel Church), and Bankstown City Council have done conservation/restoration works to the house, built a new church south of the house and pre-school south-west of the house.
(Stuart Read, notes from visits, 10/01; 13/10/06)

Further Comments

Current Use

Church, School and Pre-School

Former Use

Aboriginal land, farm estate, convalescent home, homestead

Listings

Listings

Records Retrieved: 4					
Heritage Listing	Listing Title	Listing Number	Gazette Date	Gazzette Number	Gazzette Page
National Trust of Australia register			5/31/1976 12:00:00 AM		
Register of the National Estate			3/21/1978 12:00:00 AM		
Heritage Act - State Heritage Register		00448	4/2/1999 12:00:00 AM	27	1546
Heritage Act - Permanent Conservation Order - former		00448	8/4/1989 12:00:00 AM	87	

Procedures/Exemptions

Records Retrieved: 2					
Section of Act	Description	Title	Comments	Action Date	Outcome
57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Standard Exemptions		11/9/2020 12:00:00 AM	

57(2)	Exemption to allow work	Heritage Act		8/4/1989 12:00:00 AM	
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History

Historical Notes or Provenance

Updated

Aboriginal occupation:

Prior to European settlement the Cooks River Valley was the home of a number of clans of the Aboriginal people. The Gameygal lived on the northern side of Botany Bay, between present day La Perouse and the mouth of the Cooks River. To the north of the Cooks River between South Head and present day Darling Harbour lived the Cadigal people and the Wangal people lived in an area between the Parramatta River and the Cooks River from Darling Harbour to Rose Bay. To the south of Botany Bay in the coastal area including Kurnell and Cronulla and the south coastal strip to Nowra lived the Gweagal people. While there is some argument about the location of land of the Bidiagal clan, there is some evidence that this clan lived in the area between the southern bank of the Cooks River and the northern bank of the Georges River. It is also thought the Cooks River formed the boundary between two dialect groups, the Bidiagal and the Gweagal. Previous reports on the Aboriginal past of the area have suggested that it was occupied by the Bidiagal. (Tranby Aboriginal Co-operative College, 1986; King, 1999; McDonald, 2005). The potential association of the Bidiagal people should not be discounted as a result of this lack of historical detail as after the collapse of the clan structure due to the smallpox epidemic of 1788 and general impact of European invasion, individuals travelled beyond the pre-1788 traditional boundaries. It is thought that the warmer months were spent nearer the coast and the cold months of winter were spent further inland. (Muir L 2007 Cooks River Valley Thematic History)

Due to the impact of the arrival of European colonists from 1788 and the almost immediate impact that this had on established patterns of subsistence, our knowledge of the Aboriginal people of the Sydney district is limited. Some eight individual groups or clans within the vicinity of the Parramatta area have been identified and two, the Cadigal and Wangal, most likely lived in the area that now makes up the Ashfield municipality (Attenbrow, V. & Pratten, C., quoted in SWC, 2005, 5).

Aboriginal people lived along the Cooks River for thousands of years prior to European arrival...The Cadigal and Wangal peoples made use of the land and seasons to hunt, trap, fish and forage for fruit and plants. As firestick farmers, they burned off scrub near rivers leaving only large trees spaced several meters apart, creating an open, park-like appearance (Marrickville Council website, quoted in ibid, 2005, 5).

While land closer to the town of Sydney was relatively quickly carved up as land grants to settlers in the first years of the European colony, the land on the southern side of the Cooks River was not subject to land granting until 1904. It was not until 1808 when a number of very large land grants were made over land which traditionally provided Aboriginal people access to the resource rich area of the Georges River, Kurnell Bay and Salt Pan Creek that land became the reason for conflict between the Bidiagal and European settlers. In 1809, an attack was made on two farms at Punchbowl led by a Bidiagal man named Tedbury. Tedbury was the son of Pemulway who had led perhaps the best-known campaign of resistance in the Sydney Basin including a spear attack on Governor Phillip's game keeper, a man renowned for his hostility to the Aboriginal people of the Sydney area. Pemulway and Tedbury spoke the Bidiagal dialect, and are known to have come from around Botany Bay (King, 1999)

The attack at Punchbowl was the last reported act of Aboriginal resistance to European settlement in the Cooks River Valley. In the following years due to alienation from their land and its resources and being subject to the devastation of European infectious diseases, the Aboriginal population in the area dramatically reduced. In 1845 it was reported to the NSW Legislative Select Committee that there were only 3 people of the Botany Bay clan and only fifty Aboriginal people were living in the area between the Cooks and Georges River. (Muir, L., 2007, Cooks River Valley Thematic History).

During the 19th Century European settlers transformed the land along both banks of the Cooks river as farms were established for grazing, family food needs and for other industries such as tanning, production of sugar, harvesting of timber and production of lime from many middens left by the Aboriginal people of the area for thousands of years. Lime was a scarce and necessary commodity for European settlement in the early years of the colony. (Renwick, C., Pastorelli, C., Muir, L., Sheppard, H., Denby, J., Chalcroft, G., 2008, Cooks River Interpretation Strategy).

Post-contact, the stretch of land between Iron Cove and the Cook's River was known as the Kangaroo Ground, the natural woodland would have provided a suitable habitat for possums, fern rhizomes and tubers, all of which would have been identified as valuable food sources for the Wangal (Pratten, C., quoted in SWC, 2005, 5).

Bankstown:

This area was selected for settlement by Governor Hunter, who named it Banks Town in honour of eminent botanist, Sir Joseph Banks. In 1795 George Bass and Matthew Flinders had explored the Georges River, named after King George III, the reigning monarch. They sailed along what would later be the southern boundary of the municipality. They reported their findings and were given land grants in the Georges Hall area. Bass received the first grant in 1798, of 100 acres in the vicinity of the present Hazel and Flinders Streets. He did not farm it, and eventually it reverted to the Crown. Flinders' grant was alongside Bass'. He bought more land, until he held 300 acres, but did

not farm it. Lieutenant Shortland and Surveyor James Meehan also got grants. By 1799, 1200 acres on both banks of the river had been granted to marines and ex-convicts.

The area developed slowly, as it was isolated from both Sydney and Parramatta. After Liverpool Road was constructed in 1814 it began to develop rapidly, and settlements grew up along the road. Bushrangers were a problem, and in Bankstown's early days, two, Patrick Sullivan and James Moran, were hung on makeshift gallows on the site of the present Bankstown Water Tower. A few days later several of their companions were also hung there. They were probably interred in nearby unconsecrated land.

Georges Hall:

On 6 April 1798, George Johnston received a land grant of 172 acres in the district from Governor Hunter. The grant was made up of a number of parcels of land including 12 acres at Marquee Point, 70 acres adjacent to 'Strong's Farm' and 90 acres above 'Red Bank'.

It was on the 12 acre lot at Marquee Point, at the junction of Prospect Creek and the Georges River that Johnston built a simple timber farmhouse building. It was known as Georges Hall. It became an unofficial military outpost and in 1801 it was reported that there were no less than one sergeant and four privates stationed there. George Johnston spent most of his time at his large family home known as Annandale. George Johnston died in 1823 and his son David inherited the Georges Hall property, known as Johnston's Flat and the upper farm or David Banks.

David Johnston married Selina Willey in February 1836 and the couple resided in Georges Hall. However, the land was prone to flooding and it is likely that this led to the construction in 1837 of a new house called Georges Hall, today known as The Homestead.

David and his wife lived at Georges Hall until his death in 1886, three years after his wife. In his will David left his large land holdings to be divided between his children by the Trustees. Two sons, George Robert and Arthur Alfred inherited the Georges River Estates, consisting of 1064 acres, as joint tenants. In 1876 an agreement was made between the brothers that should either of the two pass away the surviving party had the option to buy the other party's share at current market values. It appears that following the death of George, Arthur purchased George's share.

Arthur continued to reside at Georges Hall with his wife until he died in 1907 when he was found in his bedroom having shot himself with a pea rifle. His wife, Maria inherited the property and remained at Georges Hall. The property was gradually subdivided and in 1913 the Georgetown Estate was formed. Ralph Johnston controlled the 100 acre property until 1917 when it was sold to Henry Crossing, a grazier from the Pilliga.

James William Ashcroft and his wife Amelia purchased the property in 1920 residing there for only two years until James Ashcroft's death in 1922. It was then sold to Robert Harvey Layton and during this time the remaining 100 acres was subdivided and a subdivision planned known as the Deepwater Estate.

Layton sold much of the Deepwater Estate including the lot on which the original Georges Hall stood. In 1948 the After Care Association purchased Georges Hall for use as a hostel for elderly women. The name 'The Homestead' appears to have come into use by 1946 when a valuation of the house and grounds was conducted. The Association spent 2000 pounds on renovations and other necessary alterations including additional bathing facilities.

In the late 1950s it was decided to build a men's hostel on adjacent land and to finance the project the 14 lots of land around The Homestead was auctioned off (Lester Tropman and Associates, 1987).

Through funding from the Heritage Assistance Program, restoration and archaeological work was undertaken during 1992 and 1993. The building is now used as a school and pre-school and church, operated by Calvary Chapel.

Historic Themes

Records Retrieved: 50

National Theme	State Theme	Local Theme
8. Culture	Townships	Joining together to study and appreciate local history
8. Culture	Pastoralism	Outdoor relief
8. Culture	Pastoralism	Gathering at landmark places to socialise
8. Culture	Pastoralism	Enjoying public parks and gardens
8. Culture	Pastoralism	Developing collections of items
8. Culture	Pastoralism	Activities associated with relaxation and recreation

8. Culture	Defence	Parks and public gardens
8. Culture	Defence	Landscaping - Victorian period
8. Culture	Defence	Landscaping - Federation period
8. Culture	Defence	Landscaping - colonial period
8. Culture	Defence	Landscaping - 20th century post WW2
8. Culture	Defence	Interior design styles and periods - Colonial
8. Culture	Defence	Building in response to natural landscape features.
8. Culture	Defence	Building in response to climate - verandahs
8. Culture	Defence	Architectural styles and periods - Victorian (early)
8. Culture	Defence	Architectural styles and periods - colonial homestead
8. Culture	Defence	Applying architectural design to utilitarian structures
8. Culture	Defence	Adaptation of overseas design for local use
9. Phases of Life	Social institutions	Associations with Amelia Ashcroft, grazier
7. Governing	Land tenure	local government asset management
7. Governing	Land tenure	State government
7. Governing	Land tenure	Local government
7. Governing	Land tenure	Developing roles for government - parks and open spaces
7. Governing	Land tenure	Developing roles for government - conserving cultural and natural heritage
7. Governing	Land tenure	Developing roles for government - administration of land
6. Educating	Ethnic influences	Private (religious) schooling
6. Educating	Ethnic influences	Community education - adults, school excursions
5. Working	Migration	Working with hand tools and implements
5. Working	Migration	Working with animals
5. Working	Migration	Working independently on the land
5. Working	Migration	Working in the public service
5. Working	Migration	Working in local government
4. Settlement	Welfare	Beautifying rural estates
4. Settlement	Welfare	Vernacular hamlets and settlements
4. Settlement	Welfare	Shaping inland settlements
4. Settlement	Mining	Changing land uses - from rural to suburban
4. Settlement	Mining	Sub-division of large estates
4. Settlement	Mining	Granting Crown lands for private farming
4. Settlement	Mining	Early land grants
4. Settlement	Agriculture	Hostels
4. Settlement	Agriculture	Victorian era residence

4. Settlement	Agriculture	early settlement or worker's cottage
4. Settlement	Agriculture	Country Villa
3. Economy	Science	Modifying landscapes to increase productivity
3. Economy	Government and Administration	Developing local landmarks
3. Economy	Events	Landscapes of food production
3. Economy	Events	Landscapes of cultural and natural interaction
3. Economy	Commerce	Private farming
1. Environment	Exploration	Gardens
1. Environment	Exploration	Changing the environment

Recommended Management

Management Summary

Management

Records Retrieved: 4

Management Category	Management Name	Date Updated
Recommended Management	Carry out interpretation, promotion and/or education	
Recommended Management	Prepare a maintenance schedule or guidelines	
Recommended Management	Produce a Conservation Management Plan (CMP)	
Recommended Management	Prepare a maintenance schedule or guidelines	

Report/Study

Heritage Studies

Records Retrieved: 0

Report/Study Name	Report/Study Code	Report/Study Type	Report/Study Year	Organisation	Author
No Results Found					

Reference & Internet Links

References

Records Retrieved: 5

Type	Author	Year	Title	Link
Written	Damaris Bairstow with Wayne Johnson; Church of the Four Square Gospel	1991	The Homestead, Georges Hall: archaeological excavation report	
Written	Noel Bell Ridley Smith & Partners Architects	1990	Georges Hall Homestead Conservation Study	https://heritagensw.intersearch.com.au/heritagenswjspui/handle/1/8491
Written	Wendy Thorp Heritage Consultant - Historical Archaeologist	1990	Archaeological Assessment - Georges Hall	https://heritagensw.intersearch.com.au/heritagenswjspui/handle/1/9115
Written	Lester Tropman and Associates	1987	Report on the The Homestead, formerly known as Georges Hall, Georges Hall, Bankstown, NSW Author: NSW Heritage Council.;Lester Tropman & Associates.;	https://heritagensw.intersearch.com.au/heritagenswjspui/handle/1/9115
Written	Sheedy, David	1976	National Trust Classification Card - The Homestead	

Data Source

The information for this entry comes from the following source:

Data Source	Record Owner	Heritage Item ID
Heritage NSW	Heritage NSW	5045365

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